



Prevention Progress

Department of Child Abuse Prevention

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

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The legislative session came to a close and the bright spot for child advocates was the passage of the Sudden Unexplained Infant Death bill. This will allow us to collect data on all child deaths under 12 months of age which should result in our ability to secure funds to prevent child death from Abusive Head Trauma and Unsafe Sleeping Environments. Kudos and special thanks to **Senator Vivian Figures** and **Rep. Mac McCutcheon** for sponsoring the legislation and **Children First Foundation** for their work on educating the body and helping to secure the final votes for passage!

I have been traveling the state holding Sustainability Meetings in each of the Congressional Districts. The invitation for participation included programs that were funded for 2012 and those programs and long term grantees that we were unable to fund for the upcoming grant year as well as community leaders impacted by the loss. The purpose of the meetings was to establish the following:

- Transition children and families from programs that were not funded to the most appropriate services if other agencies have the capacity to absorb additional clients;
- Develop a mechanism to continue data collection to measure the impact of programming loss at the community level;
- Collectively search for funding opportunities and look for ways to support programming in the prevention process;
- Explore ways to maintain our volunteer base.

Please go to the website and look at the congressional district break down of the impact on programming. We have to be ever vigilant in our efforts to support children and families with the absence of resources.

I want to personally thank the **Alabama Realtors Association** for their continued support of The Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention, "Children's Trust Fund". The relationship has been a long and productive one with the income generated from realtor car tags going directly to child abuse and neglect programming and the proceeds from fund raisers supporting local programs. I had the honor of speaking at the quarterly meeting in Orange Beach and was completely entertained by the "Beauty and the Beach" contest that raised \$5212.75 for our common mission of supporting healthy families and communities!

I would be remiss if I did not mention the retirement of **Chief Justice Sue Bell Cobb** who has been one of Alabama's strongest advocates for children for thirty plus years. We wish Justice Cobb the best and look forward to all future contributions she will inevitably make for the children of Alabama.

As we move into a new grant season and period of considerable change let us reflect on the accomplishments we have enjoyed and not lose sight of our Mission.



Kelley Parris Barnes speaking at the District 2 Sustainability Meeting in Montgomery.

Rethinking SIDS: Many Deaths No Longer a Mystery

by Andrea Hsu

The thought of a baby dying suddenly and unexpectedly is one that keeps parents awake at night, fearing the worst. For years, little was known about sudden infant death syndrome, or SIDS. Babies would die in their sleep, and it was presumed that little could be done to prevent those deaths. Today in the U.S., more than 2,000 babies die of SIDS every year, according to government figures. But the mystery surrounding SIDS is not what it once was. Many SIDS deaths are now believed to be accidents caused by unsafe sleep practices. And some are questioning whether the term SIDS remains relevant at all.

SIDS: A 'Diagnosis Of Exclusion'

In Wayne County, Michigan, 50 to 60 infants die suddenly and unexpectedly each year, most of them in Detroit. For the past 11 years, the task of investigating those cases has fallen to Pat Tackitt, a pediatric mortality investigator for the Wayne County Medical Examiner's Office. When an infant dies, law enforcement will contact her. She'll head out immediately to the family's home, spending anywhere from one to five hours talking with the family, using a doll to help parents re-enact what happened. She'll hand the doll to the parents and ask them to show her where they placed the baby down, when they last saw the baby alive, and how they found him or her. She'll also find out who and what was around. In all, Tackitt has gone to the scene of more than 500 infant deaths — so many, she stopped counting. In almost all of the cases, Tackitt says, she found that the baby was in an unsafe sleep environment. The baby may have been sleeping face down, may have been covered by a blanket or pillow, or may have gotten lodged between sofa cushions. In some cases, the baby was sleeping with a parent who rolled on top of the infant in the night. Tackitt says these are all signs of accidental suffocation, not SIDS. "There are some deaths that we cannot prevent. These are not those deaths," she says. "The vast majority of these are preventable deaths. There's been very, very few that we've seen that could not be prevented." SIDS is defined as the sudden death of an infant under 1 year of age, which remains unexplained after a thorough case investigation, including performance of a complete autopsy, examination of the death scene, and review of the clinical history. It's often called a "diagnosis of exclusion," meaning it's the diagnosis that's given when everything else has been ruled out. Tackitt says, often the term SIDS comes up prematurely. "We find that in many cases, families have been told from the time the ambulance drove up to the time that the clergy saw them in the emergency room ... that this is going to be a SIDS death," Tackitt says. "All that means is, 'We don't know.' Why would we start out saying 'we don't know,' when we haven't even looked yet?" Some would argue that a SIDS diagnosis offers compassion in a moment of distress, and a way to avoid blaming parents amid the tragedy. Wayne County Chief Medical Examiner Carl Schmidt disagrees. "I think that's cruel," Schmidt says. "I think actually sitting down with a parent and telling them what happened is much more humane than trying to obscure the reasons why that infant actually died. Most people really want to know what happened, so they won't do it again." In Wayne County, it's been four years since they last signed out a death as SIDS. And that's true elsewhere, too.



Many cases once thought to be sudden infant death syndrome are now believed to be accidents caused by unsafe sleep practices. The image above shows a crib with a teddy bear and bumper — items the American Academy of Pediatrics warns against putting in

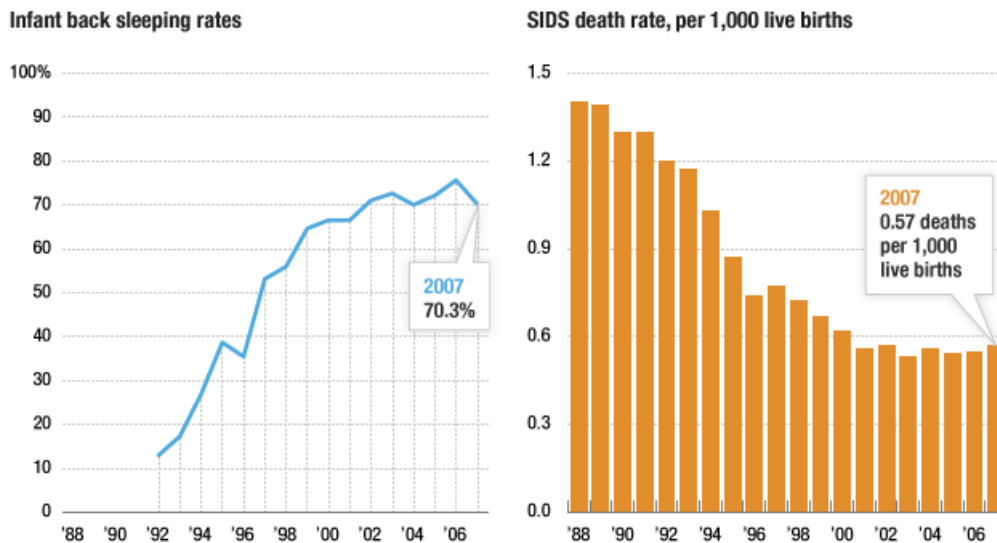
The 'Back To Sleep' Campaign

At Children's National Medical Center in Washington, D.C., pediatrician Rachel Moon says it's been several years since they've seen what she calls a "true SIDS case" in the District. "All the babies who died suddenly and unexpectedly have all died in unsafe sleep environments," Moon says. "These are all cases that could have been prevented." Moon chairs the American Academy of Pediatrics Task Force on SIDS. In 1992, it was the academy that came out with the recommendation that babies be placed on their backs to sleep, not on their stomachs. The "Back to Sleep" public health campaign that followed proved hugely successful. As back-sleeping rates soared, the SIDS rate dropped. By 2000, it had fallen 50 percent. But since then, progress has stalled. About a quarter of parents in the U.S. say they don't put their babies on their backs to sleep, and among African-Americans, it's about half. According to statistics, African-American babies die of SIDS at a rate twice that of whites. Moon has been researching why so many people disregard the recommendations. She's found everything from misconceptions about the risks of choking to distrust of doctors to confusion and skepticism. "What's happening is, you tell people that SIDS is when a baby dies and you don't know why. So then when you tell them they should put their baby on the back, sometimes they turn to you and say, 'Well, wait a second, how can you tell me that putting my baby on the back is going to help prevent this thing when you don't know what causes it?' "

Asked if she can imagine dropping the term "SIDS" at some point, she says, "Oh yeah, I can imagine a time when we just talk about safe sleep. And I think we're starting to get there. I think if people know something's preventable, and they can visualize it happening, then they're more likely to take steps to try to prevent it." For now, though, Moon says, SIDS is a term people are familiar with. So she'll continue to talk about "SIDS prevention." She does also believe that there are some true SIDS cases out there — cases in which babies were on their backs, alone in their cribs with nothing else in the crib. But, she says, those cases are very rare.

Baby Sleep Positions And SIDS Rates

In 1992, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended that babies sleep on their backs to prevent accidental deaths. As the number of babies sleeping on their backs has increased, SIDS cases have decreased.



Source: CDC's National Center for Health Statistics; National Infant Sleep Position Study (funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development) Credit: NPR

Can A Simpler Message Save Lives?

In Baltimore, public health officials have replaced the term "SIDS" with these ABCs: Alone. Back. Crib. In literature distributed in hospitals and in public service announcements, there is almost no mention of SIDS, but rather the message "Sleep Safe." They urge parents to share a room with their baby, but not a bed. They tell parents that the safest sleeping position for a baby is on his or her back, and that a baby is not more likely to choke while on the back. And they emphasize the importance of a clean and clear crib, free of blankets, pillows and toys.

From 2002 to 2010, unsafe sleep environments were identified in more than 90 percent of sleep-related infant deaths in Baltimore. The hope is that a simpler message will help save lives. On a national level, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is piloting a Sudden Unexpected Infant Death case registry in several states. The goal is to create systems that allow people to more comprehensively describe the circumstances and events surrounding sudden infant deaths. The pilot project followed a study that found great inconsistency in how SIDS deaths are reported. CDC senior scientist Carrie Shapiro-Mendoza led that study, which looked at two years of SIDS-coded death certificates. She found that in a third of the deaths, SIDS was not explicitly reported by the certifier, raising questions about whether the certifier meant for the deaths to be counted as SIDS. Instead of the term SIDS, the certifiers used other terms, including "sudden infant death" and "sudden unexpected death in infancy." Some had accompanying notes pointing to unsafe sleep environments. Still, because of the way death certificates are coded, they became part of the national SIDS statistic. Shapiro-Mendoza also found that SIDS can mean different things to different people. She points out that certifiers have varying levels of education. "In some large metropolitan areas, for instance, you may have a medical examiner who is a board-certified pediatric pathologist," she says. "In other smaller counties or jurisdictions, you may have an elected official, coroner, and he may have no medical background." The report concludes that nationally established guidelines for infant death scene investigations would help in the reporting and classification of infant deaths, and that in turn could help with identifying trends. "If we understand the mechanisms that caused these deaths, if we can actually explain why they occurred, we can hopefully prevent these deaths," Shapiro-Mendoza says.

American Academy Of Pediatrics Guidelines

Safe Sleep Practices

- Always place babies to sleep on their backs during naps and at nighttime. Because babies sleeping on their sides are more likely to accidentally roll onto their stomachs, the side position is not as safe as the back and is not recommended.
- Don't cover the heads of babies with a blanket or overbundle them in clothing and blankets.
- Avoid letting the baby get too hot. The baby could be too hot if you notice sweating, damp hair, flushed cheeks, heat rash and rapid breathing. Dress the baby lightly for sleep. Set the room temperature in a range that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.

Safe Sleep Environment

- Place your baby in a safety-approved crib with a firm mattress and a well-fitting sheet (cradles and bassinets may be used, but choose those that are JPMA [Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association] certified for safety).
- Place the crib in an area that is always smoke-free.
- Don't place babies to sleep on adult beds, chairs, sofas, waterbeds or cushions.
- Toys and other soft bedding, including fluffy blankets, comforters, pillows, stuffed animals and wedges should not be placed in the crib with the baby. These items can impair the infant's ability to breathe if they cover his face.
- Breast-feed your baby. Experts recommend that mothers feed their children human milk at least through the first year of life.
- The safest place for your baby to sleep is in the room where you sleep. Place the baby's crib or bassinet near your bed (within an arm's reach). This makes it easier to breast-feed and to bond with your baby.

Board Member Hi-Light Ferris Stephens, District 6

Mr. Stephens received his Juris Doctor in 1981 from Cumberland School of Law. He serves as an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Alabama. Mr. Stephens has developed policies and drafted successful legislation to protect the elderly and the mentally incapacitated, improve and strengthen Alabama's child torture law, require public school preventative instruction, implement election reform, and develop child support policy. He has served as an administrative law judge for the Alabama Department of Public Health; while in private practice he has served as a hearing officer for the Jefferson County Department of Public Health; he was appointed to represent the Shelby County Commission in circuit and appellate courts on personnel issues; and served as a guardian ad litem in Shelby County.



Mr. Stephens is a member of the Alabama District Attorneys Association, the Federalist Society and numerous Alabama State Bar Committees. He also served on the Governor's Welfare Reform Commission from 1995 - 96; the State Textbook Committee from 1992-1993; was a State Representative for American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) in 1994 and 1995; and is presently on the Alabama Educational Television board. Mr. Stephens also served as a temporary United States Senate staff member for Senator Jeff Sessions in 1997.

Mr. Stephens has served on the Board of the Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention since 2007.

2011 GRANTEE TRAINING INFORMATION

Who says you can't teach an old dog new tricks! Grantee Training will be delivered live via internet. Through a partnership with the Department of Education, we will be utilizing the ACCESS System to hold interactive seminars in four locations throughout the state. There will be sign in sheets at each location. Please remember that attending grantee training is a stipulation of your contract with DCAP. The program assistants will be emailing your completed contracts to you soon. The training will take place on August 30th, 9:00 to noon. The regional seminars will be held in the following locations:

Mobile County Public Schools Central Office

1 Magnum Pass
Mobile, AL

Madison County Technology Training Center

1275 Jordan Road
Huntsville, Alabama 35811
(If the attendees are not familiar with Huntsville, they need to be aware that the address is Jordan ROAD, not Jordan Lane.)

Hoover High School

1000 Buccaneer Drive
Hoover, AL

Montgomery County Schools Professional Services Center (subject to change)

515 S. Union Street
Montgomery, AL

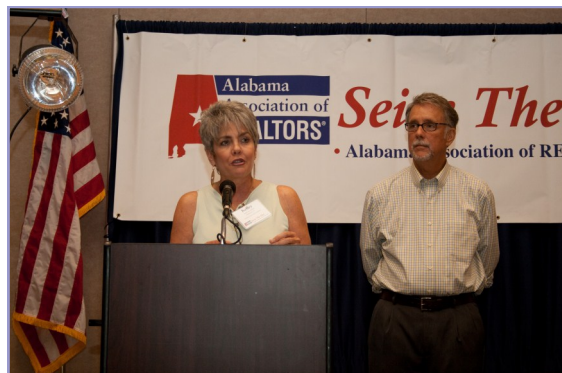
For questions please contact your field director or the front desk at 334-242-5710.

Alabama Association of Realtors and DCAP

Kelley Parris Barnes, Director of the **"Children's Trust Fund"** attended the quarterly meeting of the **Alabama Realtors Association** in Orange Beach in June. Parris-Barnes spoke at the 2011 **Beauty and the Beach Fundraising Banquet**, emphasizing the positive impact of the partnership between AAR and CTF. "We have a common mission to prevent child abuse and neglect and support healthy families and stable communities; this is an example of the positive outcomes we can enjoy when the business community partners with community level non-profits to provide services in an efficient and effective manner". The Realtors raised \$5212.75 at the benefit, CTF will use those funds as match for federal dollars to be released in the form of grants to community level agencies.



Alabama Realtors participate in
"Beauty and the Beach"



Kelley Parris Barnes and
Robert Scott, AAR 2011 President



The National Movement for America's Children, is a fast-growing grassroots movement of organizations, businesses, leaders and people nationwide who believe that the well-being and healthy development of our children is critical to our success as a nation. The economic future and stability of the communities where we live and work depends greatly on achieving this goal. The major objective of the Movement for America's Children is to awaken a true social justice movement for America's children and deliver a holistic national strategy to prevent child abuse and neglect from ever occurring and ensure the healthy development of each and every child.

Child advocacy organizations, led by Prevent Child Abuse America (PCA America) have kicked off the National Movement for America's Children to help ensure that every child has an opportunity for healthy growth and development. From now until November 6, citizens, organizations and businesses interested in helping develop a national strategy for America's children to prevent child abuse and neglect will log on to sign a pledge supporting the Movement and learn how they can get involved at the community and national level. Movement members will be hosting town hall events and listening session across all 50 states while simultaneously hosting an ongoing virtual debate and discussion at www.movementforchildren.org. This local and virtual "listening tour" is designed to help crowd-source specific policies and actions to help deliver the healthiest possible opportunity for growth and development to every child. "We strongly believe that our country has a basic obligation to provide for the healthy development of every child and we believe most Americans agree," said Jim Hmurovich, President and CEO of Prevent Child Abuse America, the lead organizer of the Movement. "But as a country we're not consistently fulfilling our commitments to all of America's children, even though we know healthy child development is the foundation of community and economic development. This is threatening our economic future and may be threatening our national security."

The National Movement is recruiting citizens, businesses, organizations, faith-based groups and policymakers to sign onto the National Children's Pledge, which calls for Americans to do take three key steps:

- Commit to helping meet the needs of all America's children in a manner that offers them the opportunity to realize their fullest potential.
- Prioritize our focus on the importance of all America's children by supporting their healthy development, regardless of race, wealth, health, religion or geography.
- Contribute to the development and delivery of a national strategy for America's children, to guide our country's implementation of policies and actions that will measurably deliver for the development of every child through and beyond the 21st Century.

Signatories to the pledge can contribute to the discussion about the content and actions to be included in the final national strategy, which movement organizers plan to deliver to the White House, Congress and candidates for office on November 6, 2011. That day will be exactly one year before the 2012 election. The message to officeholders and candidates will be clear: the healthy development of our children is a top priority for Americans and policies should be implemented at the national level to influence actions at the local level.

But the Movement focus is not solely on politicians and public policies. The Movement will be focused on seeing the national strategy implemented by all the segments and institutions in the country with a stake in contributing to healthy child development. “Everyone has a role to play and there are positive strides being made by some businesses, faith-based organizations, local towns and cities, as well as individuals, policymakers and people working hard in the child advocacy field,” said Hmurovich. “What is lacking is organized and energized public will to expand these efforts to every child and hold our country accountable for consistently delivering for America’s children.”

Please visit www.MovementforChildren.org to sign the pledge, for more information on the National Movement for America’s Children and to find out how you can get involved.

DCAP SAYS GOODBYE TO TWO LONG-TIME EMPLOYEES



Vicki Cooper Robinson and Paul Smelley have accepted positions with DHR. While we are going to miss them both, we wish them much success with their new jobs!

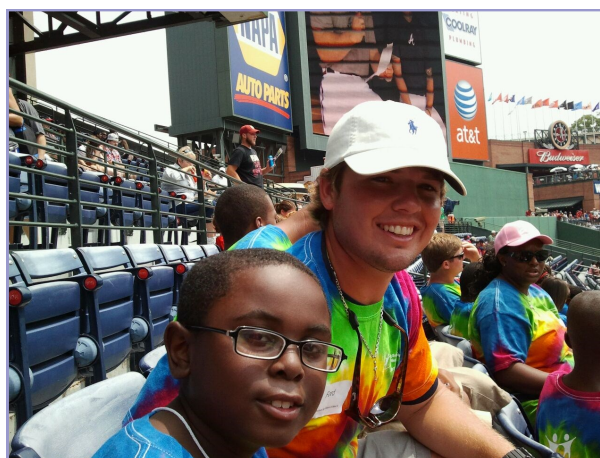
Program Year 2011-2012 Field Director/Program Assistant Assignments

District	Field Director	Program Assistant
1	Milton Jackson	Courtney Wray
2	Milton Jackson	Courtney Wray
3	Mike Roberts	Keshay Edwards
4	Mike Roberts	Keshay Edwards
5	Jessica Jackson	Cassandra Sharp
6	Jessica Jackson	Cassandra Sharp
7	Mike Roberts	Keshay Edwards

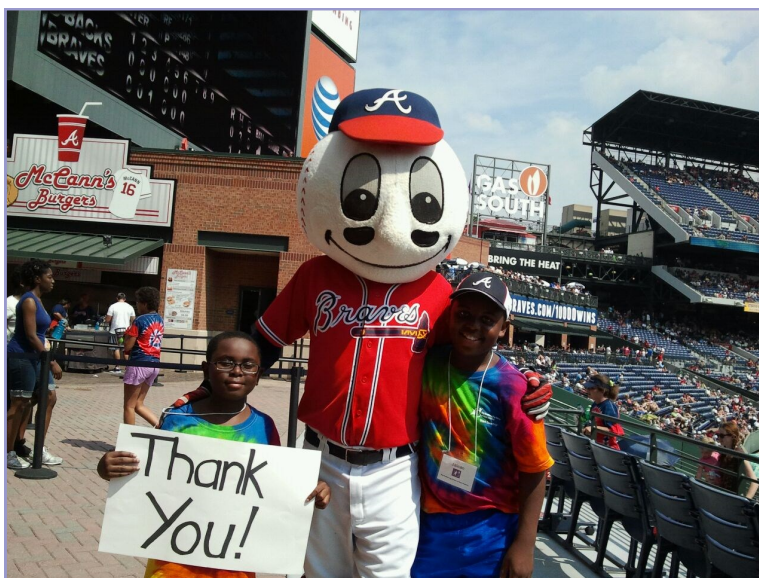
Mentors and Mentees of the MCOP Program at Big Brothers Big Sisters of West Alabama enjoy an Atlanta Braves baseball game.



Jalean and Tyler



Jordan and Ford



Jalean and Jordan

MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Child Abuse Prevention (DCAP) secures resources to fund evidence-based community programs committed to the prevention of child maltreatment; we advocate for children and the strengthening of families.

Department of Child Abuse Prevention Board of Directors

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Designee—James Slaughter

Department of Public Health

Dr. Don Williamson, State Health Officer

Designee—Maury West

Department of Public Safety

Colonel Hugh McCall

Designee— Lt. Wade Pruitt

We're on the Web
www.ctf.alabama.gov

Find us on
Twitter and
Facebook!



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